

January 18 Council Meeting and discussion of Vaccine Safety Measures aka Vaccine Passports.

I wanted to caution the Council against the creation of and requirement to show a Vaccine Passport. I know in our progressive county it is easy to hear only echoes of what sounds reasonable to ourselves and therefore assume it is in fact reasonable and acceptable to all right-thinking people. But there is a deep stream of alarm that you may inadvertently trigger with a mandate to show a document to enter a public accommodation, or to shop.

None of the council members were around to witness the cataclysmic outrage at the suggestion that every American have a number for Social Security benefits or for recording their earnings. Even today in the age when we (not me but) commonly disgorge intimate details of our lives on social media there is still a careful fence around that singular number and care taken by government to not let it be used outside prescribed uses. That may not sound equivalent, but it triggers the same deep-seated response that will surprise you if this new requirement is adopted.

Regardless of the motivations for adopting such thing, the response of an angry public of voters will be focused on their freedom, personal and social. Why is it a big deal? Memory and association. Showing a document to about daily life has vivid associations. Not ones you want to be identified with. Every classic movie about WWII, about communism, about spy craft, it is always the tyrant or his henchmen who are asking for your documents. Do not disregard emotional associations.

Also there is a real 'inside baseball' association that I include almost reluctantly. But it is a reality. For those of us who were raised as (small 'o') orthodox Christians who have read, memorized, and who were instructed in the biblical passages that warn of end times when God's people will not be able to literally 'buy or sell' or have any community engagement without showing their 'number' or the documents or the 'mark' given by the final tyrant (the Beast). For many even casual Christians these misty vaguely remembered lessons have suddenly become a possibility and commented on repeatedly in our churches and communities.

I think it would be easy for you to stick your foot under the lawn mower and be surprised by the response and outcome. I am just trying to warn you away from this potentially unhappy course of action. All of my friends in our community are vaccinated and boosted, we want to not only keep others safe we do extra steps that we know are not called for by research and studies, but make our neighbors feel more comfortable. This next step strikes reasonable people to feel is an overreach with emotional baggage attached.

Thank you for reading.

R. Sterling Mehring